Eſquire *Bickerſtaff's*

Moſt ſtrange and wonderful

1485 tt 3

PREDICTIONS

For the YEAR 1708.

Wherein the Month and Day of the Month are ſet down, when ſeveral moſt ſurprizing Accidents ſhall certainly come to paſs, as particularly that the preſent *French* King ſhall Die on the 29th of *July*. The Pope to Die the 11th of *September*. The *Dauphin* the *French* King's Son to Die on the 7th of *May*. That *Partridge* the famous Aſtrologer is to Die on 29th of *March*. On the 23d of *May* a famous Actor of the Play-houſe will Die a ridiculous Death ſuitable to his Vocation. Upon the 26th of *Auguſt* will arrive from *Flanders* ſuch a welcome Expreſs of Victory, that a Thouſand Bonfires will be made in *London* for Joy of the News, and in the ſame Month a noble Admiral will gain immortal Honour, by obtaining a ſignal Victory at Sea. On the 6th of *June* the City of *Paris* will be Burnt down to the Ground. Towards the end of *Auguſt* will be great Miſchief done in *Bartholomew-Fair*, by the tumbling down of a Booth; with ſeveral other ſtrange Things too tedious here to be related.

Licenſed according to Order.

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PREDICTIONS

For the Year 1708. &c.

I Have long considered the gross Abuse of Astrology in this Kingdom, and upon debating the Matter with my self, I could not possibly lay the Fault upon the Art, but upon those gross Impostors who set up to be the Artists. I know several learned Men have contended that the whole is a Cheat; that it is absurd and ridiculous to imagine, the Stars can have any Influence at all upon humane Actions, Thoughts or Inclinations: And whoever has bent his Studies that Way, may be excused for thinking so, when he sees in how wretched a manner that noble Art is treated by a few mean illiterate Traders between us and the Stars; who import a yearly Stock of Nonsense, Lies, Folly and Impertinence, which they offer to the World as genuine from the Planets, tho' they descend from no greater a Height than their own Brains.

I intend in a short time to publish a large and rational Defence of this Art, and therefore shall say no more in its Justification at present, than that it hath been in all Ages defended by many learned Men, and among the rest by Socrates himself, whom I look upon as undoubtedly the wisest of uninspired Mortals: To which if we add, That those who have condemned this Art, tho' otherwise Learned, having been such as either did not apply their Studies this Way, or at least did not succeed in their Applications: Their Testimony will not be of much weight to its Disadvantage, since they are liable to their common Objection of condemning what they did not understand.

Nor am I at all offended, or think it an Injury to the Art, when I see the common Dealers in it, the Students in Astrology, the Philomaths, and the rest of that Tribe, treated by Wise Men with the utmost Scorn and Contempt; but rather wonder, when I observe Gentlemen in the Country, rich enough to serve the Nation in Parliament, poring in Partridge's Almanack, to find out the Events of the Year at Home and Abroad; nor dare to propose a Hunting Match, till Gadbury or he have fixt the Weather.

I will allow either of the Two I have mention'd, or any others of the Fraternity, to be not only Astrologers, but Conjurers too, if I do not produce an hundred Instances in all their Almanacks, to convince any reasonable Man, that they do not so much as understand common Grammar and Syntax; that they are not able to spell any Word out of the usual Road, nor even in their Prefaces correct common Sense or intelligible English. Then for their Observations and Predictions, they are such as will equally suit any Age or Country in the World. 'This Month a certain great Person will be threatned Death or Sickness. This the News Paper will tell them, for there we find at the end of the Year, that no Month passes without the Death of some Person of Note: and it would be hard if it should be otherwise, when there are at least Two thousand Persons of

Note

Note in this Kingdom, many of them old, and the Almanack-maker has the liberty of chuſing the ſickliest Seaſon of the Year where he may fix his Prediction. Again; 'This Month an Eminent Clergyman will be 'prefer'd; of which there may be ſome Hundreds, half of them with one Foot in the Grave. Then, 'Such a Planet in ſuch a Houſe ſhews great 'Machinations, Plots and Conſpiracies, that may in time be brought to 'Light: After which, if we hear of any Diſcovery, the Aſtrologer gets the Honour, if not, his Prediction ſtands good ſtill. And at laſt, 'God 'preſerve K. William from all his open and ſecret Enemies. Amen. When if the King ſhould happen to have died, the Aſtrologer plainly foretold it; otherwiſe it paſſes but for the pious Ejaculation of a Loyal Subject: Tho it unluckily happen'd in ſome of their Almanacks, that poor K. William was way'd for many Months after he was dead, becauſe it fell out that he died about the beginning of the Year.

To mention no more of their impertiment Predictions; What have we to do with their Advertiſements about Pills and Drinks for the Venereal Diſeaſe, or their mutual Quarrels in Verſe and Proſe of Whig and Tory, wherewith the Stars have little to do.

Having long obſerved and lamented theſe, and a hundred other Abuſes of this Art, too tedious to repeat, I reſolved to proceed in a new Way, which I doubt not will be to the general Satisfaction of the Kingdom: I can this Year produce but a Specimen of what I deſign for the future: Having employ'd moſt part of my Time in adjuſting and correcting the Calculations I made for ſome Years paſt, becauſe I would offer nothing to the World of which I am not fully ſatisfied, as that I am now alive. For theſe laſt two Years I have not failed in above one or two Particulars, and thoſe of no very great Moment. I exactly foretold the Miſcarriage at Toulon, with all its Particulars; and the loſs of Admiral Shovell, tho' I was miſtaken to the Day, placing that Accident about 36 Hours ſooner than it happen'd; but upon reviewing my Schemes I quickly found the Cauſe of that Error. I likewiſe foretold the Battle at Almanza to the very Day and Hour, with the Loſs on both Sides, and the Conſequences thereof. All which I ſhewed to ſome Friends many Months before they happened. That is, I gave them Papers ſealed up, to open in ſuch a Time, after which they were at liberty to read them; and there they found my Predictions true in every Article, except one or two to a very minute.

As for the few following Predictions I now offer the World, I forbore to publiſh them till I had peruſed the ſeveral Almanacks for the Year we are now to enter on. I find them all in the uſual Strain, and I beg the Reader will compare their Manner with mine: And here I make bold to tell the World, that I lay the whole Credit of my Art upon the Truth of theſe Predictions; And I will be content, that Partridge, and the reſt of his Clan, may hoot me for a Cheat and Impoſtor if I fail in any ſingle Particular of Moment. I believe, any Man who reads this Paper will look upon me to be at leaſt a Perſon of as much Honeſty and Underſtanding, as common Maker of Almanacks. I do not lurk in the Dark; I am not wholly unknown in the World; I have ſet my Name at length, to be a Mark of Infamy to Mankind if they ſhall find I deceive them.

In one Thing I muſt deſire to be forgiven, that I talk more ſparingly of Home Affairs; As it would be Imprudence to diſcover Secrets of State, ſo it would be dangerous to my Perſon, but to ſmaller Matters, and that are out of publick Conſequence, I ſhall be very free; and the Truth of my Conjectures will as much appear from theſe as the other. As for the moſt

ſignal

ſignal Events abroad in France, Flanders, Italy and Spain, I ſhall make no Scruple to Predict them in plain Terms: Some of them are of Importance, and I hope I ſhall ſeldom miſtake the Day they will happen; therefore I think good to inform the Reader, that I all along make uſe of of the Old Style obſerv'd in England, which I deſire he will compare with that of the News-Papers, at the time they relate the Actions I mention.

I muſt add one Word more; I know it hath been the Opinion of ſeveral Learned, who think well enough of the true Art of Aſtrology, That the Stars do only incline, and not force, the Actions or Wills of Men: And therefore, however, I may proceed by the right Rules, yet I cannot in Prudence ſo confidently aſſure the Events will follow exactly as I predict them.

I hope I have maturely conſider'd this Objection. which in ſome Caſes is of no little Weight: For Example; A Man may by the Influence of an over-ruling Planet be diſpoſed or inclined to Luſt, Rage, or Avarice, and yet by force of Reaſon overcome that bad influence; and th's was the Caſe of Socrates: But the great Events of the World uſually depending upon Numbers of Men, it cannot be expected they ſhould all unite to croſs their Inclinations, from purſuing a general Deſign, wherein they unanimouſly agree. Beſides, the Influence of the Stars reaches to many Actions and Events, which are not any way in the Power of Reaſon; as Sickneſs, Death, and what we commonly call Accidents, with many more needleſs to repeat.

But it is now time to proceed to my Predictions, which I have begun to calculate from the time that the *Sun* enters into *Aries*. And this I take to be properly the Beginning of the natural Year. I perſue them to the Time that he enters *Libra*, or ſomewhat more, which is the buſy Period of the Year. The Remainder I have not yet adjuſted, upon Account of ſeveral Impediments needleſs here to mention: Beſides, I muſt remind the Reader again, that this is but a Specimen of what I deſign in ſucceeding Years to treat more at large, if I may have Liberty and Encouragement.

My firſt Prediction is but a Triffle, yet I will mention it, to ſhew how ignorant theſe Sottiſh Pretenders to Aſtrology are in their own Concerns: It relates to *Partridge* the Almanack-maker; I have conſulted the Star of his Nativity by my own Rules, and find he will infallibly dye upon the 29th of *March* next, about Eleven at night, of a raging Feaver; therefore I advise him to conſider of it, and ſettle his Affairs in time.

The Month of *April* will be obſerved for the Death of many great Perſons. On the 4th, will dye the *Cardinal de Noailles, Archbiſhop of Paris*: On the 11th, the young Prince of *Asturias*, Son to the Duke of *Anjou*: On the 14th, a great *Peer* of this Realm will dye at his Country Houſe: On the 19th, an old *Layman* of great Fame for Learning: And on the 23d, an eminent Goldſmith in *Lombard-Street*. I could mention others, both at home and abroad, if I did not conſider it is of very little uſe or Inſtruction to the Reader, or to the World. As

As to Publick Affairs: On the 7th of this Month, there will be an Insurrection in *Dauphine*, occasion'd by the Oppressions of the People, which will not be quieted in some Months.

On the 15th, will be a violent Storm on the South-East Coast of *France*, which will destroy many of their Ships, and some in the very Harbour.

The 19th, will be famous for the Revolt of a whole Province or Kingdom, excepting one City, by which the Affairs of a certain Prince in the Alliance will take a better Face.

MAY, against common Conjectures, will be no very busy Month in *Europe*, but very signal for the Death of the *Dauphin*, which will happen on the 7th, after a short Sickness, and grievous Torments with the Strangury. He dies less lamented by the Court, than the Kingdom.

On the 9th a *Mareschal* of *France* will break his Leg by a fall from his Horse. I have not been able to discover whether he will then dye or not.

On the 11th, will begin a most important Siege, which the Eyes of all *Europe*, will be upon: I cannot be more Particular, for in relating Affairs that so nearly concern the *Confederates*, and consequently this Kingdom, I am forc'd to confine my self, for several Reasons very obvious to the Reader.

On the 15th, News will arrive of a very *Surprizing Event*, than which nothing could be more unexpected.

On the 19th, three noble Ladies of this Kingdom will, against all Expectation, prove with Child, to the great Joy of their Husbands.

On the 23d. a famous Buffoon of the Play-house will dye of a ridiculous Death suitable to his Vocation.

JUNE. This Month will be distinguish'd at home by the utter dispersing of those ridiculous deluded Euthusiasts, commonly call'd the *Prophets*; occasion'd chiefly by seeing the Time come that many of their Prophesies should be fulfil'd, and then finding themselves deceiv'd by contrary Events. It is indeed to be admir'd how any Deceiver can be so weak to foretel Things near at hand, when a very few Months must of necessity discover the Imposture to all the World; in this Point less prudent than common Almanack-makers, who are so wise to wander in general, and talk dubiously, and leave to the Reader the Business of interpreting.

On the 1st of this Month, a *French* General will be kill'd by a random Shot of a Cannon Ball.

On the 6th, a Fire will break out in the Suburbs of *Paris*, which will destroy above a thousand Houses; and seems to be

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the foreboding of what will happen, to the Surprise of all *Europe*, about the End of the following Month.

On the 10th, a great Battle will be fought, which will begin at Four of the Clock in the Afternoon, and last till 9 at Night with great Obstinacy, but no very decisive Event. I shall not name the Place, for the Reasons, aforesaid; but the Commanders on each Left Wing will be kill'd.——I see Bonfires and hear the Noise of Guns, for a Victory.

On the 14th, there will be a false Report of the *French* King's Death.

On the 20th, the Cardinal *Portocarero* will dye of a Dissentery, with great Suspicion of Poison; but the Report of his Intentions to revolt to King *Charles*, will prove false.

JULY. The 6th, of this Month, a certain General will, by a Glorious Action recover the Reputation he lost by former Misfortunes.

On the 12th, a Great Commander will dye a Prisoner in the Hands of his Enemies.

On the 14th, a shameful Discovery will be made, of a French Jesuite giving Poison to a great Foreign General, and when he is put to the Torture, will make wonderful Discoveries.

In short, this will prove a Month of great Action, if I might have Liberty to relate the Particulars.

At home, the Death of an old famous Senator will happen on the 15th at his Country House, worn with Age and Diseases

But that which will make this Month memorable to all Posterity, is the Death of the French King, Lewis the XIVth, after a Weeks Sickness at Marli, which will happen on the 29th about 6 in the Evening. It seems to be the effect of the Gout in his Stomach, follow'd by the Flux. And in 3 Days after Monsieur Chamillard will follow his Master, dying suddenly of an Appoplexy.

In this Month likewise an Ambassador will die in London, but I cannot assign the Day.

AUGUST. The Affairs of France will seem to suffer no Change for a while under the Duke of Burgundy's Administration; but the Genius that animate the whole Machine being gone, will be the Cause of mighty Turns and Revolutions in the following Year. The new King makes yet little Change either in the Army or the Ministry, but the Libels that fly about his very Court, give him uneasiness.

I see an Express in mighty haste, with Joy and Wonder in his Looks, arriving by Break of Day on the 26th of this Month, having

aving travell'd in 3 Days a prodigious Journey by Land and ea. In the Evening I hear Bells and Guns, and ſee the blaz- g of a Thouſand Bonfires.

A Young Admiral of Noble Birth does likewiſe this Month in immortal Honour by a great Atchievement.

The Affairs of Poland are this Month entirely ſettl'd: Au- uſtus reſigns his Pretenſions, which he had again taken up for me time: Staniſlaus is peaceably poſſeſs'd of the Throne: nd the King of Sweden declares for the Emperor.

I cannot omit one particular Accident here at home, that ear the End of this Month much Miſchief will be done at attho'omew Fair by the fall of a Booth.

SEPTEMBER. This Month begins with a very ſurprizing it of Froſty Weather; which will laſt near 12 Days.

The Pope having long languiſh'd laſt Month, the Swellings his Legs breaking, and the Fleſh mortifying, will die on the th inſtant, and in 3 Weeks time, after a mighty Conteſt, be ceeded by a Cardinal of the Imperial Faction, but Native f Tuſcany, who is now about 61 Years of Age.

The French Army Acts now wholly on the Defenſive, ſtrong- fortified in their Trenches; and the young French King ſends vertures for a Treaty of Peace, by the Duke of Mantua; hich, becauſe it is a matter of State that concerns us here at ome, I ſhall ſpeak no further of it.

I ſhall add but one Prediction more, and that in Myſtical erms, which ſhall be included in a Verſe out of Virgil.

Alter erit jam Tethys, & altera quæ vehat Argo
Delectos Heroas.

Upon the 25th Day of this Month, the fulfilling of this Pre- iction will be manifeſt to every Body.

This is the furtheſt I have to proceed in my Calculations for e preſent Year. I do not pretend, that theſe are all the great vents which will happen in this Period, but that thoſe I have t down will infallibly come to paſs. It will perhaps ſtill be bjected, why I have not ſpoke more particularly of Affairs at me, or of the Succeſs of our Armies abroad. which I might d could very largely have done; but thoſe in Power have iſely diſcourag'd Men from medling in Publick Concerns, nd I was reſolv'd by no Means to give the leaſt Offence. This will venture to ſay, That it will be a Glorious Campaign for e Allies, wherein the Engliſh Forces both by Sea and Land, ill have their full Share of Honour; That Her Majeſty Queen NNE will continue in Health and Proſperity; And, That o ill Accident will arrive to any in the Chief Miniſtry.

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As to the particular Events I have mention'd, the Read may judge by the fulfi.ing 'em, whether I am of the L with common Aſtrologers; who, with an old paultry C and a few Pot-hooks for Planets to amuſe the Vulgar, have my Opinion, too long been ſuffer'd to abuſe the World: an honeſt Phyſitian ought not to be deſpis'd, becauſe there ſuch Things as Mountebanks, I hope I have ſome ſhare of putation, which I would not willingly forfeit for a Frolick Humour; Aud I believe no Gentleman, who reads this Pa will look upon it to be of the ſame Laſt or Mould with common Scribb'es that are every Day hawk'd about.

My Fortune has plac'd me above the little Regards of Sc ling for a few Pence, which I neither valne nor want: Th fore let no wiſe Men too haſtily condemn this Eſſay, inten for a good Deſign to cultivate and improve an ancient Art, in Diſgrace by having fallen into mean unskilful Hands. little Time will determine, whether I have deceiv'd others my ſelf; and I think it no very unreaſonable Requeſt, Men would pleaſe to ſuſpend their Judgments till then. I once of the Opinion with thoſe who deſpiſe all Predic from the Stars, till in the year 1686, a Man of Quality ſh me written in his Album, That the moſt learned Aſtron Captain *H.* aſſur'd him, He would never believe any thin the Stars influence, if there was not a great Revolution in gland in the year 1688. Since that time I began to have Thoughts, and after eighteen Years diligent Study and A cation, I think I have no Reaſon to Repent of my Pain ſhall detain the Reader no longer than to let him know, the Account I deſign to give of next Years Events ſhall in the principal Affairs that happen in Europe; and if denied the Liberty of offering it to my own Country, I appeal in the Learn'd World, by publiſhing it in Latin, giving order to have it printed in Holland.

FINIS.